

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CCTV PARTNERSHIP JOINT EXECUTIVE

MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, GERONON ROAD, LETCHWORTH, SG6 3JF
ON MONDAY, 5TH SEPTEMBER, 2022 AT 7.00 PM

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Ian Albert and Keith Hoskins, Geoffrey Williamson, Jan Goodeve, Pervez Choudhury, Jeremy Newmark, Richard Henry, Jackie Hollywell and Joan Lloyd.*

In Attendance: *James Lovegrove (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer) and Ian Couper (Service Director - Resources), Hilary Shade, Sarah Pateman, Mike Bourne and Mike Read.*

1 ELECTION OF A CHAIR

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer called for nominations to Chair this meeting of the CCTV Partnership Joint Executive.

Councillor Richard Henry proposed and Councillor Keith Hoskins seconded and, following a vote it was:

RESOLVED: That Councillor Ian Albert be elected as Chair of the meeting.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Judi Billing (North Herts Council), Anthony Spencer (Hertsmere Borough Council) and Peter Boylan (East Herts Council).

3 MINUTES - 21 MARCH 2022

Councillor Pervez Choudhury noted that at the meeting on the 21 March 2022, there was a discussion and agreement that this Executive was responsible for financial decision making and a report would be brought forward with details of the formula for how much would be charged back to the company for CCTV services.

Councillor Ian Albert and Members of the Committee confirmed that these discussions and took place at the last meeting, and it should therefore be included as an amendment to the draft Minutes presented.

The Chair moved to a vote, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Part 2 Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 21 March 2022 be amended as detailed in the discussion in the Minutes from this meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes (as amended) of the Meeting of the Committee held on 21 March 2022 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

4 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (1) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded;

- (2) The Chair drew attention to the item on the agenda front pages regarding Declarations of Interest and reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question.

5 CCTV Operations Report

Sarah Pateman from Stevenage Borough Council presented the report entitled 'CCTV Operation Report' and advised of the following:

- Continue with the agreed objectives from 2021/22 into 2022/23, which are intelligence, expansion of the partnership and communications.
- The Support Services Group (SSG) Ltd are now embedded in the control room following the re-procurement to reflect this the Code of Practice has been updated, attached as Appendix A.
- Bishops Stortford, Hertford and Ware Town Councils, via East Herts, will remain part of the Partnership.
- Partnership continues to expand, with 609 cameras, some are monitored proactively and some reactively.
- Continue to work alongside the Police to develop and liaise over software.
- 1 application for use of RIPA since the last meeting.
- More mobile cameras have been purchased by Partners recently and there were now 54 being monitored.
- There were no Data Protection or GDPR incidents since the last meeting.
- Q1 data is presented at appendix B – increase of 78 incidents compared to 2020/21, with anti-social behaviour the biggest factor.
- Review of cost allocations between Partners is taking place.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Pervez Choudhury
- Councillor Jeremy Newmark
- Councillor Jackie Holywell

In response to a question from Councillor Pervez Choudhury, Sarah Pateman advised that the next report on this meeting agenda would detail the amounts to be recharged.

In response to a question from Councillor Jeremy Newmark, Mike Read advised that the SSG was the Support Services Group, not Security Services Group as written.

Councillor Jackie Holywell noted that it was good to see East Herts working with Parish and Town Councils.

In response to a question from Councillor Pervez Choudhury, Sarah Pateman advised that they were constantly engaging with Parish and Town Councils, as well as other District Councils, to expand the service, but this was a long process and was ongoing.

The Chair moved to a vote and it was:

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Joint Executive noted the performance of the CCTV Partnership to date and noted the outcomes as documented.
- (2) That the Joint Executive approved the changes to the Codes of Practice to reflect the updates for the new Monitoring Contractors.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) To provide the Joint Executive with an update on CCTV performance and issues related to CCTV operations.
- (2) To seek approval to changes to the Codes of Practice.

6 CCTV Officer Management Board report

Ian Couper, North Herts Council, presented the report entitled 'CCTV Officer Management Board Report' and advised of the following updates:

- Acknowledged the request for an additional report regarding the finances involved.
- The CCTV company also have to agree any charges that we are seeking to charge them.
- Therefore negotiations began between the Officer Board and the Company Directors around what they would view as a suitable charge – detailed in 8.1 of the report.
- The complications around reopening this is that three parties would then be involved in the negotiations and this could not be done openly within the Committee meeting.
- If Members were inclined to reopen negotiations, it could be done.

Councillor Pervez Choudhury noted that the report does not state the costs to the Partnership of providing the services and does not provide evidence of profit margins, with no formula details. He suggested it would be helpful to see alternatives and models, for Members to decide the best way forward. None of the information that Members need to take a decision had been provided.

Councillor Jeremy Newmark noted that this process was far too opaque to be acceptable – a previous discussion did not appear in the minutes and limited details provided in reports. It would not be responsible for Members today to progress with the system as currently presented.

Councillor Joan Lloyd advised that the meeting would need to move into Part 2 to discuss the financials. If Members had questions ahead of the meeting, they should speak to their Officers at their District Councils beforehand.

Councillor Newmark noted that ideally this would have been the case, but both him and Councillor Choudhury only found out about the meeting earlier today from their Officers, and had only been provided the agenda at this point.

In response to points raised, Ian Couper advised:

- The charge to the company is based on cost and the company then charges onto the end user of the cameras with the profit. The Partners will take benefit from the reallocation of costs, not profit.
- It covers the costs of the partnership, and any capacity the company takes is beneficial. Under the current arrangements they covered half the running, without using 50% of capacity.
- Needed to work out the charge for each camera and ensure this was a fair balance with the requirements of the company.
- The company would not necessarily accept whatever option the Partnership would suggest.
- Due to Hertsmere Councillors having not been provided the reports in time, it might be that the decision can be deferred.

Councillor Ian Albert highlighted that it was unfair to make Hertsmere colleagues take a decision this evening.

Ian Couper suggested that this could be taken as a Delegated Decision, with the relevant Executive Members from each of the Partnership Councils.

Councillor Choudhury advised that this would be a suitable compromise.

In response to a question from Councillor Jan Goodeve, Mike Bourne advised that it is not a binary choice between reactive and active and that some cameras are reactive in the daytime, but become actively monitored at night.

Ian Couper proposed the following wording as an additional recommendation 'That the Committee note the proposal on charges to the CCTV Company detailed in the report, and delegate to each Council's Officer Management Board representative, in consultation with the relevant Executive Member from that Council, authority to agree the final proposal on charges to the CCTV Company.' This was supported by Members present.

Ian Couper continued with updates to the report, and advised:

- Recharge of the cameras to the company is one part and then need to recharge the remaining costs across the four partnership Councils.
- Stevenage had taken on some Housing Association cameras, which were reactive and would be unfair if these were charged at the same rate.
- Looked at charging reactive cameras at a lower rate (based on treating as 1/16th of an active camera). Still need more work but indicators are that any changes in each Partners costs would mainly be driven by camera growth.
- Also looked at charging based on fixed and variable costs. Proposed not to take this forward as this would mean Stevenage Borough Council would reduce their contributions, with the other Councils making this up.
- Proposed that instead there would need to be a minimum number of cameras required for new members of the Partnership.

In response to a question from Councillor Pervez Choudhury, Ian Couper advised that roughly the increase in recharges to Stevenage Borough Council would be £30k and £10-15k in Hertsmere Borough Council. East Herts recharge would be reduced in line with Hertsmere and North Herts reduced in line with Stevenage. These figures were based on the number of cameras already used by Councils. Stevenage would see a reduction in their contributions, with others picking the difference up, but would be unfair to bring this as a recommendation at this stage, without further works.

Ian Couper advised that details and numbers would be provided at the next CCTV meeting.

Ian Couper provided the final updates from the report, and advised:

- Paragraph 8.10 onwards covered the Digital Asset Management System and the request from the Police to fund a resource in the control room. This had now been changed to offering support to volunteers from the police.
- It was positive to see the Town Councils in East Herts confirming their continued membership.
- Expansion of the Partnership is being explored, with conversations taking place with Watford and Welwyn Hatfield and if agreement is made that another meeting may be required.
- Financial position for 2021/21 is detailed, with the main variances being in supplies of services and income.
- Stevenage had reduced their overheads, which was positive for the overall financial position.

Councillor Pervez Choudhury noted that he would like to see more consideration given to meeting dates ahead of time.

The Chair moved to a vote, including the additional recommendation, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Joint Executive:

- (1) Noted the work carried out by the Officer Management Board since the last meeting of the Joint Executive.
- (2) Commented on using Active and Re-Active categories for determining equivalent camera numbers.
- (3) Commented on the principle of introducing a fixed element to how charges are split between partners.
- (4) Confirmed that the Partnership will not fund police resource to download police evidence.
- (5) Noted that East Herts have withdrawn the request to remove a large number of their cameras from the partnership.
- (6) Noted the proposal on charges to the CCTV Company detailed in the report, and delegated to each Council's Officer Management Board representative, in consultation with the relevant Executive Member from that Council, authority to agree the final proposal on charges to the CCTV Company.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: To give Executive members an opportunity to comment and give feedback regarding the work carried out by the Officer Management Board. To make decisions where they are required by the Terms of Reference of the Joint Executive.

Following the conclusion of this item, there was a discussion around the next meeting date for the CCTV Partnership Joint Executive. Ian Couper suggested March 2023 for the next meeting, which was supported by Members and was expected to be hosted by Hertsmere Borough Council.

The meeting closed at 7.57 pm

Chair